

Department of Planning and Environment

Our ref: OUT22/5022

Dominic Crinnion
Planning and Assessment Group
NSW Department of Planning and Environment

Email: dominic.crinnion@planning.nsw.gov.au

24 May 2022

Subject: **Thunderbolt Wind Farm (SSD-10807896) - Environmental Impact Statement**

Dear Mr Crinnion

I refer to your email of 26 April 2022 to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Water and the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) about the above matter.

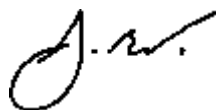
Thunderbolt wind farm is the proposed development of a wind farm with up to 33 turbines and associated infrastructure, as the Stage 1 part of the Thunderbolt Energy Hub, located southwest of Uralla and Armidale in the NSW New England region. Stage 2 will include both a solar farm and wind farm.

DPE Water recommend that the proponent provide more information on the ability to obtain water for the project including (where relevant) any agreements and sufficient water entitlements. The proponent should also clarify if there are any other works within waterfront land (other than the proposed watercourse crossings) and demonstrate how they are in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (NRAR 2018). Please find our pre-determination and post approval recommendations in Attachment A.

Any further referrals to DPE Water and NRAR can be sent by email to water.assessments@dpie.nsw.gov.au or to the following coordinating officer within DPE Water:

Simon Francis – Senior Project Officer
E: simon.francis@dpie.nsw.gov.au
M: 0428 926 117

Yours sincerely



Luke McIver
A/Manager, Assessments, Knowledge Division
Water Group

Attachment A

Detailed advice to DPE Planning & Assessment regarding the Thunderbolt Wind Farm (SSD-10807896) - Environmental Impact Statement

1.0 Water Supply and Licencing

1.1 Recommendation – Prior to Determination

The proponent should demonstrate their ability to obtain a secure water supply for the project. The response should be inclusive of relevant agreements where required and demonstrate sufficient water entitlements can be acquired where necessary.

The proponent should also provide an indication of the dam type proposed to take water from, as this can limit use.

Explanation

Insufficient evidence of the ability to obtain water for the project has been provided in the EIS. The water demand of 80-110ML is to be sourced under an agreement with landholders from bores or existing dams. There is no indication of discussions with landholders so the ability to supply the necessary water is unclear. Securing an agreement with landholders is critical to the viability of this project.

An indication of dam type proposed to be used should also be provided as there are limitations for use on harvestable rights dams and basic landholder rights dams.

1.2 Recommendation – Prior to Determination

The proponent should provide details of any additional works or licences required for the project.

Explanation

Page 175 of the EIS states all other water sourced from either surface or groundwater sources to meet project construction will be licenced and managed, as required, in accordance with the requirements of the *Water Management Act 2000*. This suggests there is possible further works and licences required. Provide details of any additional works or licences required for the project. If new bores or pumps are proposed it is recommended their installation and operation be assessed as part of the State Significant Development assessment process to avoid the need to obtain approvals separately under the *Water Management Act 2000*.

2.0 Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land

2.1 Recommendation – Prior to Determination

The proponent should clarify if there are any other works within waterfront land, other than the proposed watercourse crossings and demonstrate how they are in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities.

2.2 Recommendation – Post Approval

Works within waterfront land need to be in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (NSW NRAR, 2018).

Explanation

All works within waterfront land should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities. This includes the proposed watercourse crossings. Confirmation is also requested if there are works other than these crossings within waterfront land. These Guidelines can be found

<https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/licensing-and-trade/approvals/controlled-activity-approvals/what/guidelines>

End Attachment A
